

Sewall Warehouse
(Granite-Fronted Building)
156 Water Street, east side between
Central and Union Streets
Hallowell
Kennebec County
Maine

HABS No. ME-150

HABS
ME
6-HAL
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ME-150

SEWALL WAREHOUSE (GRANITE-FRONTED BUILDING)

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Location: 156 Water Street (east side of street), Hallowell,
Kennebec County, Maine

Present Owner
and Occupant: Dominique F. Blodgett

Present Use: Barbershop and apartments

Statement of
Significance: This building is a typical commercial brick row block
of the early 19th century (c. 1809), originally
brick-fronted, and showing a characteristic form
of stylistic "up-dating" in its Greek Revival-era
granite facing. Built as a warehouse, it has
become apartments-over-shop. Its third-story
public hall (now altered) may represent an inter-
mediate functional change of the 19th century.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Built c. 1809-10.
2. Architect, builder, suppliers, etc.: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an in-
complete chain of title to the land on which the structure
stands. Reference is the office of the Recorder of Deeds,
Kennebec County.

1801 Deed. August 26, 1801, recorded February 4, 1803 in
Book 4 page 427
Peter Clark
to
James Clark

1809 Deed. September 22, 1809, recorded March 13, 1810 in
Book 17 page 336 (lot of land "with privileges of brook")
Moses Sewall of York
to
David Sewall of Hallowell

- 1810 Deed. January 1, 1810, recorded March 13, 1810 in Book 17 page 339 ("together with the wharf and warehouse thereon")
David Sewall of Hallowell
to
David Sewall of York
(N.B.: "This deed is meant to convey all my right and title to the premises as derived from James Clark to my father Moses Sewall and from him to me, as also the improvements thereon.")
- 1822 Deed. January 10, 1822, recorded January 19, 1822 in Book 40 page 231
David Sewall of York
to
Artemus Leonard
- 1830 Deed. March 18, 1830, recorded March 20, 1830 in Book 67 page 293
Artemus Leonard
to
Rufus K. Page
- 1836 Deed. May 25, 1836, recorded June 1, 1836 in Book 86 page 199
Rufus K. Page
to
President, Directors and Company of The Bank of the United States
- 1838 Deed. February 9, 1838, recorded February 15, 1838 in Book 108 page 497 ("together with the Wharf and Buildings thereon being part of the Wharf called Leonard's Wharf")
President, Directors and Company of The Bank of the United States
to
Joseph Cowperthwait, Thomas Dunlap and Herman Cope
- 1841 Deed. September 28, 1841, recorded October 5, 1841 in Book 123 page 500
Joseph Cowperthwait, Thomas Dunlap and Herman Cope
to
John Bacon, Alexander Symington, and Thomas Robins
- 1847 Deed. February 11, 1847, recorded March 4, 1847 in Book 154 page 243 ("with all the ... appurtenances, buildings, improvements & wharfs, ways, watercourses")
John Bacon, Alexander Symington and Thomas Robins
to
Samuel Walker and Richard F. Perkins

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- 1847 Deed. March 4, 1847, recorded March 4, 1847 in
Book 154 page 245 ("with the wharf and store houses
thereon")
Samuel Walker and Richard F. Perkins
to
Isaac Smith
- 1870 Deed. June 30, 1870, recorded July 23, 1870 in
Book 274 page 369
Olive G. Smith, Sophia S. Walker, James Atkins,
James Atkins Jr., Abby D. Merrill, Florence B.
Merrill, Maria E. Elliott and Edwin Merrill
to
James H. Leigh
- 1902 Devise (real estate in will). August 26, 1902,
recorded September 6, 1902 in
Book 443 page 542
James H. Leigh
to
Martha E. Leigh
- 1907 Devise (real estate in will). May 1, 1907, recorded
May 6, 1907 in
Book 474 page 505
Martha E. Leigh
to
Grace A. Leigh
- Note: History of title unclear between recorded transfers
of 1907 and 1924.
- 1924 Deed. April 30, 1924, recorded May 9, 1924 in
Book 613 page 565
Hallowell Trust & Banking Company
to
Alton L. White
- 1945 Deed. August 14, 1945, recorded August 20, 1945 in
Book 818 page 603
Alton L. White
to
Lucille M. Potter
- 1946 Deed. March 12, 1946, recorded March 19, 1946 in
Book 832 page 287
Lucille M. Potter
to
Dominique F. Blodgett

- 1946 Deed. July 18, 1946, recorded July 22, 1946 in
Book 842 page 144
Dominique F. Blodgett
to
Fred D. Blodgett and Olive Blodgett
- 1963 Deed. September 5, 1963 recorded October 14, 1963 in
Book 1319 page 484
Fred D. Blodgett and Olive Blodgett
to
Dominique F. Blodgett

4. Original plans, construction, etc.: None.
5. Alterations and additions: On the basis of present research, some of the following summary is either speculative or based on internal evidence.
- a. The granite ashlar facade is, stylistically, a feature of the Greek Revival era, when many commercial structures were faced with stone. A date in the 1840's is suggested. The granite is from the Hallowell quarries (which in the previous decade had furnished the stone for Bulfinch's Maine State House, and was in the later part of the century to furnish granite for public buildings throughout the eastern United States).

An apposite contemporary account is the following, from the Maine Cultivator & Hallowell Weekly Gazette, August 1, 1846:

Since the erection of the brick block of stores by Mr. Clark and Mr. Means, other owners of buildings on Water Street have greatly improved their premises by putting in elegant store fronts, and enlarging the dimensions of their windows, which before looked more like prison sky-lights than otherwise. We notice, also, that the owners of Kennebec Row have entered into the spirit of improvement, and have commenced at No. 1 to demolish the front of brick, to make way for granite. This will be a great improvement, and we hope will not stop till that whole block shall be renovated from its present gloomy, antediluvian and prison-like aspect, and emerge into the characteristic appearance of modern times, which would not only add to the beauty of the street, but also increase the trade; for who would not enter a store with the appearance of neatness, not only internally but externally in

preference to one of a different description. We hope the owners of buildings "down town" will consult their interests, and not be left in the background.

- b. The ground story facade, or store front, has undergone at least one graphically documented change; it has probably been changed more than once.
- c. Three dormers, no longer present, appear on rear gable in 1873 panorama photograph reprinted in Historic Hallowell.
- d. Third floor cove ceiling added in 19th century for Odd Fellows Hall on this floor; modern false ceiling covers this.
- e. Modern partitioning divides once-open second and third floors.

B. Sources of Information:

- 1. Old views: The building appears in a panoramic view in a c. 1811 drawing in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts by Jacques Gerard Milbert; reproduced in: M. & M. Karolik Collection of American Water Colors & Drawings 1800-1875, Vol. II, Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1962, p. 35 (cat. #816).

The following photographs are reprinted in Historic Hallowell (1962):

- a. Panoramic photograph of c. 1873 showing river side of building (fol. p. 9).
 - b. 1870 Flood photograph showing facade (p. 104).
 - c. Photograph post-1870 [see later facade of Emporium which adjoins on north; cf. above photograph/ (obverse of middle fold of Panorama following p. 9)].
 - d. Undated photograph [with earlier Emporium facade/ showing earlier store front (p. 63)].
- 2. Bibliography:
 - a. Primary and unpublished sources: Kennebec County Registry of Deeds and Registry of Probate, Augusta, Maine 04330.

- b. Secondary and published sources: None.

PART 11. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The building is a rectangular three-story commercial row block, originally a warehouse, granite-faced in the mid-19th century, retaining its original brick surface on the rear (river) facade.
2. Condition of fabric: Well-maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Approximately 20' x 40', rectangular plan, three stories, three-bay facade.
2. Foundations: Granite.
3. Wall construction: Brick, with granite facing on upper two stories of west (street) facade, ashlar cut, laid in regular courses.
4. Framing: Wood.
5. Porches: Deck-style modern porch, supported on posts and brackets, gives access to ground floor at rear, where grade drops to permit full-height basement facade.
6. Chimneys: Brick chimney rises immediately behind each facade between north and central bays.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Simply detailed post-and-beam frame store-front is glazed with plate glass, has splayed recessed entrance. South bay of this street front is occupied by single door and sidelight at foot of stairway to second floor. On rear facade, basement wall shows garage door and vertically battened entrance; ground story above contains glazed single doors on middle and north bays.
 - b. Windows and shutters: West front windows are without moldings having sharp-cut Greek Revival stone reveals. Third story windows are half-windows (square), while those on second story are double-hung sash; they have projecting stone sills.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Lateral (north-south) gable roof, set below coping ridges formed by extension of north and south party walls.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Coping walls north and south, slight overhang of gable east and west, with fascia boards below overhang.
- c. Dormers: None (see I-A-5 c.).

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: Partial basement presents full-height facade on down-grade east (river) front.
 - b. First floor: Open single space of barber shop, interrupted only by bathroom in southeast corner.
 - c. Second floor: Stair from outside street entrance rises west-east along south wall to second floor stairhall created by modern partitioning; door at head of stairs gives access to apartment on this floor; this scheme repeated on floor above (third floor), where modern false ceiling cuts off space under cove ceiling in gable.
 - d. Attic: None.
2. Stairways: Inside stairwell rises through structure along south wall. Outside wood stairs ascend from ground level to deck porch on east front.
 3. Flooring: Vinyl tile on ground floor (barber shop).
 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Modern wall paneling and sound-proof ceiling tiles.
 5. Doorways and doors: Modern simple wooden trim and doors.
 6. Decorative features and trim: Decorative stencilling, 1870's by stylistic evidence, on cove ceiling added in 19th century to third floor; now hidden by false ceiling.
 7. Notable hardware: None.

8. Lighting: Modern electric fixtures.
9. Heating: Modern central heating.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Building is sited on grade sloping west-east from Water Street, main commercial street of city, down toward Kennebec River bank.
2. Enclosures: None.
3. Outbuildings: None.
4. Walks: None.
5. Landscaping: None.

Prepared by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
August 1971
and
Alan Mast
February 1973

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were made during 1971 and 1972 in the course of a photo-data project in the cities of Bath, Hallowell, Monmouth, and Richmond in the State of Maine. The project was arranged in response to the initiative of Mrs. Linda B. Clark of Row House, Inc., in Hallowell, Dr. Charles E. Burden of the Bath Marine Museum, Mrs. Paul L. Roberts of the Richmond Historical and Cultural Society, and Mr. H. Earle Flanders of Monmouth. All of these preservationists actively solicited or contributed funds and effectively fostered increased interest in the architectural heritage of their respective communities. The project was under the general direction of James C. Massey, at that time Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey; was supervised in the field by Denys Peter Myers, then Principal Architectural Historian of HABS; was carried on by Student Architectural Historian Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Boston University; and was continued by Alan Mast, Maine Arts and Humanities Commission, and Mary-Eliza Wengren (Mrs. Richard E., Jr.), Maine Historic Preservation Commission, under the field supervision of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. Photographers were Mark C. Bisgrove, Sylvester Cobbs, Stanley Schwartz, Leon P. Shepard, and Richard Dwight Sturgis.